

AMIGA SHOPPER

By the time you read this subscriber's letter, Amiga International may have a new owner. Or, maybe not...

Dear Subscriber,

I am writing this subscription letter early on in the month and well before the news pages of the magazine itself are put together. Therefore, although I can't bring you any exclusive news about the Commodore International situation here, there may be some exciting stuff on page 12. Or maybe there won't! In any case, we'll still keep you updated on all the latest developments in what is fast becoming the longest-running news-story ever.

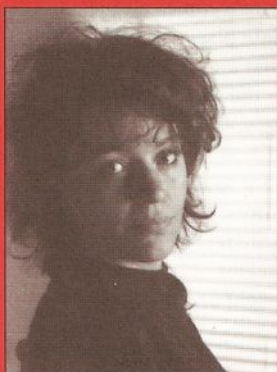
This month, we are celebrating the 10th anniversary of the Amiga – the first machine, the A1000, was announced at the June CES in the States way back in 1985. Richard Baguley takes you through the last 10 years of the Amiga, including the highlights and the best and worst Amiga software and hardware that has been released.

And to satisfy any video enthusiasts, our Supertest this month is on genlocks. Steve McGill reviews 12 of the best and recommends the one that suits your needs. Plus, there's the usual bunch of reviews and tutorials to help you get the most from your Amiga.

Amiga Shopper has been covering the serious side of all things Amiga since May 1991 which was our very first issue. You know it makes sense. Enjoy.



Sue Grant,
Editor.



Sue Grant is the new Editor of Amiga Shopper. She has worked in publishing for over 12 years and has been at Future Publishing for two years, firstly as Production Editor of Super Play and then as Deputy Editor of Amiga Format.

Subscriptionsdisk

Yes, even with two Coverdisks, you still get your exclusive *Subscribers' disk*. Graeme Sandiford shows you how to use its contents.

Hello and welcome once again to the little bit of blue plastic that is exclusive to Amiga Shopper Subscribers. We have another mixed selection of the latest and best PD – there's always something for everyone.

Remind

What, the Subscribers' disk has got to go today? I knew I forgot something. Well, from now on, I'm going to use a more intrusive, and less ephemeral, method of remembering important dates and times. Remind is just such a thing. It's a program that will remind you of important dates.

Installing Remind is extremely easy – simply unpack it and then copy it to your hard disk, or a floppy. Obviously, because of its nature, the ideal place to put Remind is the WBStartup drawer of your Workbench disk or partition. This way, it will run each time your Amiga is booted – no excuses for forgetting to run the program!

Once run, you can enter several important times or dates by selecting the Add tool from Remind's window. You can ask the program to remind you of your appointment daily, weekly, or even yearly. Thanks to a well thought-out interface, you can quickly select a date one or two weeks, or even months, in advance from the current date by clicking on a button.

Anime Guide

With their incredibly realistic animation, mind-blowing special effects and unpredictable storylines, it's little wonder that anime has taken off in a big way in Europe and America. However keeping track of films and their storylines is not easy – there are so many them. This file is an AmigaGuide document that contains details of popular anime productions. It's been Powerpacked, so you'll need to use PPGuide, or a similar program, to read it.

The information in the document has been obtained from a variety of sources on the Internet and is quite comprehensive – it's got details of every video I've got, or have heard of. Most entries have descriptions of the films' plots and episode outlines. The guide is spilt into two areas: the Anime Title Listings for films, and the Episode Guides for adapted TV series.

PicCon V2.50

This is the latest version of the extremely popular programmers' tool PicCon. It's mainly intended to be used by programmers, because its main asset is that it can convert images to sourcecode for inclusion in your programs or games.

However, since it supports DataTypes, you can use it to convert to and from any image format you have the DataType for. This program is shareware, so please don't forget to check the registration documentation.

The main new feature of the program is the ability to load animations, as well as single images. As in previous versions, the program has support for a bewildering number of formats from different kinds of machines – even for consoles such as

Nintendo's SNES and Sega's Mega Drive. This really is an essential tool for most programmers, especially games developers.

Drop'n Act 2

This is a cool tool for those of us who want to save ourselves from developing an RSI on our mouse-clicking finger. How so? Drop'n Act is a very clever program – it can be taught what types of data a file is and then it can launch the correct application to display it. So, all you need to do is drag the file over the Drop'n Act's icon and the program does the rest for you.

After you have unpacked the archive, you need to run the installation script which copies all the necessary files to the appropriate places in your system. Once you have done that and re-booted your system, you need to go to the Prefs drawer of your system disk. This is where you tell the program what to do with what type of file.

For example, you might want to select Viewtek to display animations and pictures, or get the program to launch your favourite text-editor to edit text files. Hey, I know it's the height of laziness, but who wants an over-developed right arm?

OpaqueMove

This is another one of those WBhacks that can really come in handy. OpaqueMove is primarily intended for use by people with graphics cards or AGA machines. It makes moving windows around Workbench that much easier. It accomplishes this by enabling you to move windows while they are still opaque. What *that* means is that you can move a window without selecting it and by clicking on any point on it.

This is particularly useful if you have a cluttered Workbench screen, like mine, since you don't have to keep bringing windows forward, or pushing them back. Anyway, the instructions are in the archive – have fun and er... be productive.

LZX

If there is one thing that is always at a premium in the computer world it's storage space. LZX is a new archiving system that claims to be the most efficient yet – on *any* platform. Like most programs of its sort, it can be run from the CLI and follows a similar command format as LHA.

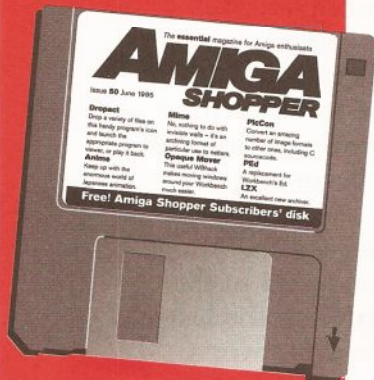
There are three versions supplied:

LZX_68000EC for machines with the basic 68000 or 68010 CPUs; LZX_68020 for machines with 68020; and 68030 processors and LZX_68040 for more powerful machines. Give it a go, it has good compression rates and is surprisingly fast.

Mime

There is a funny story behind this one. The morning I downloaded this from CIX, one of the guys from Amiga Power had a file from the Internet that had been archived using the Mime format. As it happened, I just got this program 10 minutes earlier.

It can be executed from CLI and is actually two programs – mpack and munpack – I'll leave you to figure out what they do! ■



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